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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ADMINISTRATION, DURING THE SUMMER RECESS OF PARLIAMENT.

"—*To shew* VICE *her own Feature, Scorn her own Image,*
"*and the very Age and Body of the Time his Form and*
"*Preſſure.*" HAMLET.

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HISTORY

OF THE

ADMINISTRATION

UNDER

PITT'S EXPRESS

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A SHORT

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ADMINISTRATION, &c.

IN the ſlow and inceſſant progreſs of Vice, from littleneſs to magnitude, there is an imperceptibility which defends it from the oppoſition of Virtue.—Like the proceſs of vegetation, its regular advancement is unnoticed, and it riſes gradually into bulk and enormity, without ſhocking our natures. If we remain untainted by its familiarity, and are capable of reverting to its origin, we are amazed, indeed, that our ſenſes ſhould have been ſo deluded, in the interim, as not to perceive its progreſſive riſe; and ſeeing it now, in all the fulneſs of maturity, our hearts revolt againſt it, and "its example ceaſes to be "contagious." Had the Monſter, at any one moment, been impeded by the rebellion of conſcience, and a temporary ſtop in his career had

been the conſequence; or, by a more than ordinary impulſe of his nature, had he leaped beyond his uſual bound, attending Virtue would have been awakened from her delirium, and the chain would have been broken, that led her unwittingly along.

The preſent Adminiſtration have found, in this ſeries of deception, their only ſecurity from popular reſentment. Their advancement in the practices which have, in the end, involved their country in the moſt *diſgraceful* calamities (for calamity is diſgraceful, when it ariſes from injuſtice) has been ſo gradual and inceſſant, that the minds of men have been led unconſciouſly along. They have not perceived the velocity of the torrent, on which they were driving, till they have come to the whirlpool, from which they cannot recede, and which is *now* opening to receive them. All the horrors of their ſituation are now up in arms againſt them, and bravery is diſcomfited by deſpair. Miniſters have, in the courſe of this ſummer, with ſuch uncommon ſtrides advanced in their purſuit to accelerate the end they have in view, that impoſition is at an end. The crimes and errors of ſeven years, collected and amaſſed, have broke at once on the aſtoniſhed eyes of men, and conviction and terror have taken place of ſtupor and deluſion. There is a riſing ſpirit in the country, at the preſent

ſent moment, which Miniſters dread to encounter; it is full of awakened vengeance, and, like a rolling globe of ſnow, is gathering magnitude from its progreſs. That ſpirit is not formed for the acceptation of freſh deluſions; it dares to aſſert the native proweſs of the mind; and, feeling that the nation hath been abuſed, it is buſied in examining into the true cauſe of our humiliation and diſtreſs, and ſeems determined to drag the Authors into open day.

Men now acknowledge the full force of that aſſertion, which was made by an honourable gentleman, whoſe penetration is equal to his zeal, "that indolence and impotence of mind, "however great, could not, of themſelves, have "created all our misfortunes. That the Weakneſs "of the Head could not have been equal to the "taſk of ruining ſo great an Empire in ſo ſhort "a time; but that the Vileneſs of the Heart muſt "have lent its powerful aid, and that T——rs "muſt have poſſeſſed the ear of M——y."*

With the ſame certainty, they now perceive the meaning of that aſſertion of the Miniſter, which his creatures have attempted to conſtrue into virtue, "that the moment was not yet come, when he "could honourably reſign his place." They ſee that

* Mr. T. T——d's ſpeech, June 21, 1779.

this ſeeming firmneſs is no other than a criminal adherence to his ſyſtem, and ſignifies, that having brought the national bark into the midſt of the tempeſt, he would not deliver up the management to any ſtrong hand, that might reſcue her from the danger, and conduct her into port; but would himſelf compleat the ruin he had begun, and abide by the helm till ſhe daſhed to pieces on the rock.

The arts which Adminiſtration have uſed to conceal their deſigns from the fury of the people, have been as numerous as their iniquitous meaſures, that made concealment neceſſary.

In the firſt ſtage of that unnatural conteſt from which all our diſgraces have ſprung, they lulled the ſuſpicions of men aſleep by propagating the doctrine of unconditional ſubmiſſion. Men are tenacious of property: and being told that America could only be preſerved by deſpotic rule—that all diſtant colonies muſt be held in a ſpecies of bondage; and that we had precedents out of number, in the hiſtory of Rome, for our conduct—they ſubmitted to the ſpecious arguments; and flattering themſelves with the pleaſing hopes of drawing ſuch a revenue from America as would alleviate the taxes of this country, they ſuffered, though with apprehenſion

ſion and regret, the firſt beginnings of that ſyſtem of domination which hath concluded in diſaſter and ruin.

This viſionary proſpect ſoon vaniſhed, and men were about to inquire into the real cauſe of our adventurous conduct, when the Miniſter informed them, that a revenue from America was not the object of contention, but that the ſupremacy of Parliament muſt be maintained.—The example of diſobedience, he ſaid, would extend its influence, and the ſuppreſſion of the American revolt could alone preſerve our other dependancies. The luſt of property and dominion again had its effect, and men took up the ſpecious doctrines without inveſtigating their ſolidity—By and by, however, the reſiſtance that they met with taught them a leſſon of humility; and in the moments of diſtreſs and reflection, they diſcovered that their conduct had been dictated by pride more than by policy; and that, having originated in injuſtice, it was likely to conclude in defeat. The Miniſter ſaw the riſing conviction, and feeling it impoſſible to ſubdue the evidence of truth, he gave way to the torrent, collected impudence from neceſſity, and embraced infamy to maintain his power. He came forward, with an effrontery that yet aſtoniſhes upon recollection, and declared that he never had an idea of Unconditional Submiſſion; that he

wiſhed

wiſhed only to ſubdue in order to conciliate; and that he conceived an Union, upon any terms, to be better than a continuance of the Conteſt. People were thunderſtruck with his aſſurance, but the hopes of peace made them lenient and ſubmiſſive.

This ſpecious artifice had but a very ſhort duration. The true motives on which the propoſitions were founded, would perhaps have lain dormant for a time, if to the publication of the American treaty with France (which of itſelf rendered negotiation on the footing of dependance impracticable) there had not been added the appointment of men to be Commiſſioners, in whom the Americans could neither have confidence nor hope.

The ſubſequent meaſures to this were equally calculated for deception. The treatment of the Commiſſioners, and the rejection of the terms, were uſed as provocatives to the indignation of the thoughtleſs in this country, and a new argument for coercion was built on the violence of American meaſures. The extremes of war were now to be let looſe, and the eloquent Proclamation, with which the Commiſſioners cloſed their farce of Negotiation, actually declared, "that ſince we "could not ſubdue, we would deſtroy and render "the country of as little avail to our enemies as

" poſſible." This was, in fact, to declare, that ſince we could not conquer thoſe that oppoſed us in arms, we would inſtitute a war on the innocent and the naked, where only humanity, religion, juſtice, and conſcience would be in array to impede us. Theſe were enemies that the Adminiſtration of Britain now feared leſs than they did thoſe " rag-" ged colts of Americans," as they politely called them, whom, three years before, they treated with inſolent and vindictive contempt.

Through the whole courſe, the deception has been kept up by means of that eafineſs of diſpoſition which induced the people to aſſent to the doctrines that were given them for the day, rather than " undergo the fatigue of thinking for " themſelves." On their ſupineneſs have the meaſures of Adminiſtration been founded :—the acquieſcence of the one hath encouraged the other to proceed, and the proof of their forgiving diſpoſitions made them aſpire to heights hitherto unexplored. The experiments that they have made on the temper of Britain may perhaps induce future Miniſters to follow them at an humble diſtance, if they do not, by climbing ſo high, bring the fabric of the Empire about their heads, and cloſe the ſcene of adminiſtration with their own and the national exiſtence.

In

In future ages, it will be the wonder of men, that, in the brevity of human life, there ſhould be acquired ſuch a perfection of t——y, or ſuch a combination of indolence and blunder, as hath been the means of deſtroying, in one ſhort portion of one Reign, the magnificence of that Empire, which it hath required the labour of centuries to rear. It hath been the remark of Hiſtorians, that the decline of Empires hath borne ſome proportion to the riſe: but it has been the peculiar fate of Britain, by one rapid fall, to give a new leſſon to Nations, of the Viciſſitude of human affairs, and to charge hiſtory with an example of Perfect Humiliation.

The Hiſtorian, who undertakes the arduous taſk of recording the ſyſtems, meaſures, and events that have occurred in the progreſs of the preſent Reign, will experience more difficulty, than any former writer had reaſon to expect. He will have to combat with the feelings of Poſterity; and it will be found, that the moſt authentic documents will hardly ſerve to procure the reception of memoirs ſo extraordinary and ſo unparalleled as they muſt be. The World will recede with horror from the tale, and will hardly conceive it poſſible, that a ſet of men ſhould league themſelves, for the mere emoluments of office, or the paltry conſideration of foreign hire,

hire, to betray the country which they were appointed to maintain.

To ſtrengthen and confirm the facts, therefore, that the general Hiſtorian muſt unfold, we wiſh to collect the Occurrences of one ſummer, while yet they are warm on the minds of men, and when neither falſehood nor exaggeration would paſs undetected. There is a weight in the evidence, that comes directly on the cloſe of an action, which a more diſtant relation cannot, in its nature, poſſeſs. It comes recommended by our feelings, and while memory is yet aſſiſted by the ſenſibility of the heart.

It was the declared purpoſe of Government, as the Congreſs had rejected their propoſitions of accommodation, to perſiſt in the conteſt, and to aid their former meaſures of coercion, by inſtituting a war of depredation and ſpoil. It was given out, that the nerves of the preſent campaign would be ſo ſtrengthened, that the moſt flattering expectations of ſucceſs might be drawn, and that American revolt and independance would cloſe before the end of the year. To colour theſe aſſertions, the American Secretary declared, "that a majority of the people "in the Colonies were friendly to Britain, and "that they were daily flocking to the royal

"ſtandard." He went even ſo far, as to ſay, "that there were more Americans collect-"ed and regimented, under the Britiſh Com-"mander, than under the Congreſs, and that "we could inliſt men for five or ſix dollars, "while they could not procure them under "two hundred or two hundred and fifty pounds "of their paper currency." * Theſe bold and ſpecious aſſertions had their effect, and inclined thoſe, who had not totally thrown off their dependance on M——rs, to truſt a little further to their management. Accepting theſe aſſertions as truths, they had no doubt, but that M——rs would take advantage of the riſing affection in America, and arm the friendly Majority againſt the inimical Minority of the people. They congratulated this country, on the change of ſentiment in the Colonies, as much for the happy tranquility it would reſtore, as that it would ſuperſede the neceſſity of carrying into execution, that plan of havoc and deſtruction, with which the peaceable and defenceleſs villages were threatened. But what was their aſtoniſhment and deſpair, when they ſaw the ſpecious proſpect overhung and clouded by indolent delays; and thoſe nerves, of which they had heard ſo much, kept in England for the greater part of the time, that was ne-

* Lord George Germaine's Speech, June 8, 1779.

ceſſary

ceſſary to the accompliſhment of the promiſed ſucceſs! Preparations were indeed made, and a ſquadron was in ſome forwardneſs early in the ſpring; but by unaccountable miſmanagement, that ſquadron, with ſome regiments of Troops on board, and with the equipage for the Campaign, (which ought to have been diſpatched in the month of February) did not finally ſail from the Channel till the latter end of May.* To add to the protraction, Admiral Arbuthnot was clogged by a large fleet of Merchantmen, which ſo interrupted him in his voyage, that it was the 26th of Auguſt before he arrived at New York: and then the troops, which he had on board, were ſo affected by the length of the voyage, and the diſtreſſes of weather they had met with,

* Miniſters will perhaps ſay, that the ſquadron was detained by the invaſion of Jerſey. It is indeed a truth, that the Admiral's zeal for the preſervation of a valuable iſland, induced him, without orders, to ſail to its reſcue; but it will be very ſtrange, if Adminiſtration can find any real argument of defence in this circumſtance. Jerſey, on the 16th of May, was attacked by a ſquadron of four frigates, two bombs, and ſixty flat-bottomed boats. The firſt intelligence that Miniſters received of the matter, was attended alſo by an account, that Admiral Arbuthnot was gone to its relief. No ſhips of force were on the ſtation—No proviſion was made againſt ſuch deſultory attempts, and had it not been for the fortunate aptneſs of the ſquadron deſtined to America, the iſland muſt have fallen into the enemy's hands. In this we have a capital inſtance of their total want of information.

that they were unfit even for the duty of garriſon ſervice. By this ſtrange and unpardonable conduct, the Campaign was loſt; and inſtead of that activity, and thoſe exertions that were promiſed, the ſummer was waſted in an impotent ſhew of action; and in operations that tended to incenſe the friendly without diſtreſſing the violent.

An expedition was made to the coaſt of Virginia, under the conduct of General Mathews, which, with proper ſupport, would have annoyed and divided the enemy in a ſenſible manner. That ſupport, however, it was not in the power of the Commander-in-chief to give: without troops to detach, or equipage for the maintenance of any ſerious operation—that inroad concluded in the deſtruction of a number of trading veſſels, (the property of individuals) a few armed ſhips, and ſome ſtores.

It is worthy remark, that the Naval Officer who commanded in the expedition, reported to the Commander-in-chief, "that from the va-
"rious accounts he had *heard* of the diſpo-
"ſition of the people, the moſt flattering hopes
"of their return to allegiance might be ex-
"pected; that they ſeemed importunately deſi-
"rous that the royal ſtandard might be erec-
"ted;

" ted, and that the moſt poſitive aſſurance was " given him, that all ranks would reſort to " it." To this report of the friendly diſpoſition of the Provinces, he added that the town of Portſmouth, which they were then in poſſeſſion of, was a paſs of very great importance; " the port was an exceeding ſafe and " ſecure aſylum for ſhips againſt an enemy, " and was not to be forced even by great ſu- " periority *." Theſe loyal Provincials however, *if there were any*, and this important harbour was abandoned, for want of thoſe reinforcements, which the indolence of Government failed to ſupply.

The advantage which Major General Prevoſt had gained in the province of Georgia inſpired him with the indiſcreet idea of penetrating into Carolina. He was compelled to make a feint to draw off the American General from a project which he deemed conſiderable; but what he at firſt deſigned merely as a Diverſion, he ſuddenly changed into an Enterprize. Deluded by the ſame fatal error of the friendly diſpoſition of the people, which the artful and intereſted have inceſſantly rung through all its changes, he preſſed forward, and determined on the attack of

* Sir George Collier's letter to Sir Henry Clinton, in the London Gazette of 2d June.

Charles

Charles Town. Having taken them ſo unexpectedly, there is little doubt, but with a co-operation by ſea, the town might have been forced to ſurrender, and a very advantageous poſt conſequently eſtabliſhed in the Province. But a plan without concert or agreement, unknown to the Commander-in-chief, unthought of in the intended predatory operations of the Campaign, was not likely to receive the reinforcement it required; and, though ſurprize might effect a momentary ſhew of ſucceſs, it was not expected by any military man that it would terminate in conqueſt. However well inclined to aſſiſt him, the General had it not in his power. —The neceſſaries for the campaign were ſtill in England; and notwithſtanding the bold aſſertions of the Miniſter, the Commander-in-chief felt his inferiority, and found, that though, like the ſnail, he might occaſionally venture abroad in ſearch of proviſions, yet his ſecurity and protection depended more upon his Shell than himſelf.—General Prevoſt was therefore abandoned to his fate; and though a ſecond convention, which was expected in the minds of men, did not happen, yet repulſe and diſcomfiture overtook the expedition; and the General was juſt fortunate enough to eſcape, and take ſhelter on the iſlands of St. James and St. John. Inſtead of the friendly Majority, which we were taught

to believe exiſted in the Continent, he, for his part, met with a determined and univerſal ſpirit of reſiſtance:—he ſaw innumerable bodies of militia collecting around him, and every impediment to ſucceſs that ingenuity or attachment could contrive; but not the ſmalleſt portion of returning Allegiance, ſave in the ſtories of deſigning Earwigs, the Refuſe and the Reptiles of the country, through which he paſſed. The General is now ſo convinced of the difficulty of an attempt on Carolina, that though he begs, from prudential motives, to refer Miniſters to Lieutenant-Colonel Prevoſt for his reaſons, yet he declares "that it cannot be eligible for him to "extend his poſts *." Theſe reaſons are not proper for the public eye—but men will find ſcope for divination, and will be able to make concluſions not far diſtant from the truth,

In this, as well as in the expedition to Virginia, they will find the fulleſt refutation of the Miniſter's aſſertion reſpecting the diſpoſition of the People. The royal ſtandard was erected in Virginia, and Charles Town was ſummoned to ſurrender—If there was indeed that Majority of friends which we were taught to expect, what prevented them from reſorting to the banner and avowing their ſentiments? They could not be deterred by

* London Gazette of September 25th.

motives

motives of apprehenſion, ſince their own numbers, unconnected with the Britiſh force, determined their ſecurity. They were in themſelves ſuperior; but now, ſupported by the Britiſh army, the inimical Minority could have given them neither diſturbance nor terror. What, then, can the People of this Country think of the M——r's aſſertion, but that he dared to aſſume a falſehood; and impoſe a direct and palpable deluſion on the minds of men, to lead them on to the continuance of a Conteſt, that muſt finally conclude in the overthrow of Britain?

'If the determined oppoſition that was made, on every ground, to the arms of Britain, was not enough to convince us, that the moſt criminal falſehoods were alledged of their returning affection, the Conduct of the preſent Campaign, on our parts, brings ſuch effectual evidence of the fact, that the moſt ſtubborn Miniſterialiſt will admit conviction. Nay, ſuch would be the ignominy of perſiſting in the aſſertion, after the conduct they have aſſumed, that, of the two ſhames, they will themſelves adopt the leaſt; and, with ſome qualifying excuſe, acknowledge the falſehood, as the means of wiping off a part of the diſgrace, that would follow from inſtituting a War of Havoc and Depredation on their *Friends*. "A majority of the people of Ameri-"ca is friendly to this country;" and yet the

M——r,

M——r, who made this aſſertion, hath ſanctified by his approbation, if he did not order by his inſtructions, a War of Wantonneſs and Havoc in the fields of that Country. He hath turned all its horrors from our *Enemies*, and directed them againſt our *Friends*. Our Enemies were in arms, and advanced into the field to meet us; our Friends were naked, and retired to the villages. From the ground, where encounter would have been equal, and where Danger had her laurels for Enterprize, we turned our arms againſt the defenceleſs, and begun a maſſacre, not a war (for there cannot be a war where there is not an oppoſition) of the unarmed and the peaceable. No poſt was to be obtained, no country to be reduced; but, without any proſpect of advantage, the meaſure was purſued, and Infamy was augmented by Succeſs.

Even if the whole Continent was inimical to Britain, theſe Predatory Expeditions were without excuſe. They are barbarous, and oppoſite to thoſe rules which civilization hath introduced among Nations; and which heretofore it hath been the pride and pleaſure of Britain to promote. It gives a ſenſation of pleaſure, in the midſt of our horror, to ſee Humanity make reſervation of our part of the Species; and eſtabliſh a line, beyond which the warrior cannot puſh his exploits, without ignominy and ſhame. We view, with

aſtoniſhment and pain, in the preſent day of univerſal refinement, every inſtance of ſavage cruelty that recurs between Rival States—The wanton Spoilers bring degradation on their arms; and, with the contempt of mankind, inſtead of intimidating, they provoke and arouſe the enemy whom they torture. Inſtances of this impolitic barbarity between Nations are rare. The Caſe of Retaliation deters thoſe whom Nature cannot—They know that it neither requires ſtrength nor wiſdom to make tranſient deſcents on the extended dominions of an enemy, and ſpread the horrors of the firebrand—Puniſhment indeed may overtake, but caution cannot prevent, ſuch enormities; and the beſt defence that can be eſtabliſhed, is to glory in the example of a contrary behaviour. But if inſtances of ſuch Wantonneſs occur but ſeldom between States, in whom enmity is rooted by habit, how much more rare are they found between the Child and the Parent, whoſe diſſenſion is but of yeſterday?—Did cuſtom even juſtify it in other caſes, the memory of affection would prevent it in this. We ſee, therefore, the conduct of Adminiſtration, in ſanctifying ſuch a practice in the Continent of America, even if the whole people were friendly to the cauſe of revolt, in a light ſo glaring, impolitic, and unprecedented, that the art of man cannot ſoften the conſtruction of the guilt.

But

But if there was any truth in the aſſertion of M——rs, or if they themſelves believed, that a Majority of the Provincials were friendly to Britain, what excuſe, what explanation of their conduct can be made?——The modeſty of language would fail in the deſcription of their Crime, and they muſt eſcape without the fulneſs of Cenſure, for want of competent Accuſation.—Good Heaven! is it poſſible that a Set of Men, in the face of God and Nations, ſhould dare to let looſe the Extremes of War, and ſpread fire and havoc over a Country, which they publicly declared to be inhabited by their *Friends*—A deteſted Wretch, whom Heaven, for the puniſhment of its vice, made the tyrant of Rome, ſet the firebrand to that city; and involved it in a deluge of flames; but he left all the ſpirit of its inhabitants unreſtrained, and at liberty to act for their common preſervation. Not ſo do the Neroes of the preſent day—Having involved towns and villages in a blaze, the wretched inhabitants are driven before the ſword, and doubly is that man attacked, who has the confidence to endeavour to ſave his property. Future Ages will not credit the tale—There is a brutality in the idea, to which the human mind cannot accede—It will be conſidered as a fiction, ſuggeſted by the warm fancy of a foe, for the eternal damnation of their names among men, and not as an act to which Nature, in the growth of her deformity, could

riſe. But while Poſterity may doubt and reaſon about the Truth, we are forced implicitly to believe, ſince we have not yet ceaſed to execrate and feel it. If there were really a Majority of the People their Friends, to what part of the Country could they go and meet with Enemies? In Holy Writ, when the Being of Earth and Heaven went towards Sodom and Gomorrah, we find, that peradventure fifty, twenty, nay, ten, righteous perſons ſhould be found there, he would not deſtroy it for the *ten's* ſake—But, in the political annals of the late Campaign, we find it given as an excuſe for the deſtruction of towns, that fifty, twenty, or ten, unfriendly perſons were found in them. The righteous *many* could find no protection or excuſe for the unrighteous *few*, nor could they even themſelves be ſpared from the deſtruction that was meditated for the others.

The manner in which the Officers, who executed theſe infamous Orders, have attempted to extenuate the guilt, is a proof of the ſenſe which they themſelves have of their enormity—They contrive weak arguments to excuſe the ravages, which were committed, in the circumſtances under which they acted; and thereby prove that ſuch conduct, in the general uſage of war, is inadmiſſible and lawleſs. The argument for the expedition to the coaſt of Connecticut is truly ſingular—" Becauſe the trade of his Majeſty's faithful

"faithful ſubjects, on the High Seas, had been "impeded and almoſt totally deſtroyed, it was "judged neceſſary, that deſultory invaſions ſhould "be made along the Coaſt."* A reaſon of ſo curious a nature, perhaps, was never aſſigned. It was judged, that the true and effectual way of preſerving the trade of Britain from the American privateers, was to deſolate the Coaſt, and burn the villages, of that country!—Abſtracted from every other conſideration of impolicy, we conceive it was the very worſt means that could be purſued to accompliſh the end: for, provided that no other Cottages, but thoſe of the men belonging to the Armed Veſſels, were deſtroyed; theſe men, deprived of all ſhelter and ſubſiſtence on Shore, would be driven to Sea, and obliged to exerciſe depredation as a Trade, inſtead of an Enterprize: and if other Cottages were reduced to aſhes, the houſeleſs wretches muſt alſo ſeek the aſylum of veſſels, and, conſequently, the extent of the warfare muſt be enlarged from their increaſe of ability. That this concluſion is juſt, may be deduced from this fact, that no armed veſſels were deſtroyed in this expedition, but Spoil, in its wideſt expanſion, reached no further than whale-boats and coaſting ſmacks. The town of Fairfield, and ſeveral boats, were

* Sir George Collier's letter in the Gazette Extraordinary of September 23d.

reduced to aſhes; becauſe ſome two or three of the Inhabitants had the confidence to oppoſe the invaſion of the Britiſh Troops. Were they taught to expect a Majority of friends? and becauſe their friends would not tamely ſubmit to ſee their warehouſes pillaged, their cottages plundered, their inſtruments of huſbandry, and their engines of commerce deſtroyed, muſt their harmleſs villages be conſumed? Self-defence, though admitted in the Law of Nature and Nations, has been the greateſt of crimes in the Law of the late Campaign, and has been the means of reducing the wretched tenements of thouſands to aſhes. Newark, becauſe the inhabitants were obſtinate enough (*treacherous* is the Gazette-term) to reject the ſafeguards of an invading enemy, and chuſe rather to defend themſelves than ſubmit to the protection of P—nd—rs, was alſo involved in fire, "and the ſmall town of Greenfield ſuffered the ſame *Chaſtiſement*." Elegant ſoftening epithet! What man who is acquainted with the energy of language, would have ever conceived that the paternal and ſcholaſtic term, *Chaſtiſement*, would have ever been adduced, by a Britiſh Seaman, to expreſs the rage of devouring flames, and the perfect annihilation of a town! Theſe are the reaſons given by the Naval Officer who conducted the Expedition, but the General who had the command on ſhore, and who was more immediately concerned in theſe Horrid Scenes, does not even adduce ſo ſpecious a

pretence,

pretence. His reaſon actually is, and let it be recorded to the infamy of the name of T—n, "that becauſe the power of Congreſs was ſup-"ported by the arts practiſed to inſpire a credu-"lous multitude with a preſumptuous confidence "in our forbearance, he wiſhed to detect the de-"luſion," by ſpreading all the horrors of the torch.* Good God! was there any preſumption in confiding in the known Practice and Laws of War? Was there any preſumption in confiding in the juſtice and humanity of Britons? It is not poſſible to read the Letters that have filled and diſgraced the Gazettes of London, without feeling the Infamy that hath been brought on the Britiſh Arms by theſe deſultory atchievements.

Were any further proof neceſſary for the refutation of what the American Secretary declared, reſpecting the Majority of Friends that we ſtill had in America, we have it in the publiſhed ſituation of the Aſſociated Loyaliſts at the preſent moment. They now exiſt upon donation; and copies of their Memorials to Sir Henry Clinton, imploring the ſupport of Government, are handing about in this country for the purpoſe of raiſing a ſubſcription. Nay, Briefs have been publiſhed in our Pariſh Churches and contributions are making from door to door,

* Major General Tryon's letter in the Gazette of October 6th.

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While we have thus diſgraced ourſelves with operations that would have brought indignity on Goths, the Americans, in more than one inſtance, by noble and dangerous enterprize, have acquired true laurels; and convinced us that there is not only a ſpirit of cool intrepidity in the Colonies; but alſo, that they have acquired the perfection of military diſcipline. Their aſſault on Stony Point was a manœuvre that will immortalize the name of Wayne; and even their unſucceſsful expedition to Penobſcot, is a proof of their activity and zeal. Their conduct in circumſtances of extreme difficulty, when they were attacked by more obſtinate Enemies, than even the *fire*, and the ſword of Britain, has convinced every rational and thinking man, that the ſpirit of a country, when aroused in the cauſe of freedom, is invulnerable, and bids defiance to every ſpecies of oppoſition. We ſee them now the ſame connected and determined people, unanimous in their ſtruggle, and neither to be intimidated by our ravages, repulſed by force, nor divided by ſtratagem. And though the Miniſter may tell us, as uſual, in the day of his budget, "that next year" will bring with it conqueſt and peace, we have every reaſon to believe that America is not to be regained at leaſt by thoſe who have driven her to diſunion. In the events of the preſent Campaign we ſee that all our diſaſters have ſprung, not from the inattention or indolence of the Commander in Chief, but the unpardonable neglect of M——rs in not ſupplying the

the General with thoſe reinforcements and ſtores, without which, it was impoſſible to take the field, and act with ſerious offence.

Perhaps M——rs would have been excuſed for protracting the embarkation to America, if their preparations and proviſions for other departments of the war had been ſo active as to admit of no diverſion—They would have been excuſed, if the reinforcements that were at firſt deſtined for America, had, on their knowledge of the rupture with Spain, been withheld altogether; and combined with the grand force of the Empire, for the more important operations of the Campaign. But when we find that an uniform inattention hath prevailed throughout, and that every branch of the war hath been left equally deſtitute of ſupport, our deteſtation will riſe in proportion to our aſtoniſhment.

Notwithſtanding the aſſertions of the Naval Miniſter that our force would at leaſt be equal, if not ſuperior, to the united fleets of France and Spain, yet, on the 18th of June, no more than twenty-eight ſail of the line, and ſix frigates, ſailed with Sir Charles Hardy from Portſmouth; and but two or three ſhips joined him when he came to Plymouth Sound. The Adminiſtration had ſufficient time to prepare for the event of a Spaniſh War, for though the Miniſter took upon him to ſay but

a few days before the delivery of the Manifeſto on the 16th of June, "that he had no apprehen-"ſions of a rupture with that power;" yet, on the publication of the reſcript, we found that Government were not only well acquainted with the intentions of Spain; but were ſenſible, from their own conduct, that it muſt unavoidably happen. Men of judgment and penetration would have taken the advantage of time, and ſince they could not meet the combined fleets in a deciſive action, would have at leaſt prevented the junction. Such heretofore hath been the policy of Britain. A force of thirty, or thirty-two ſhips would have been capable of blocking up the French fleet in the harbour of Breſt, or by menacing their ſhores and inſulting their flag, of forcing them to hazard a diſtinct engagement—but we, in the abſence of all diſcretion, with impotent delays,*

* It is a curious fact, that after the grand fleet was ready for ſea, Sir Charles Hardy continued in port no leſs than fourteen days for a quantity of Langridge ſhot, which was preparing for him at Woolwich-Warren. Veſſels were taken up by Government to convey this ſhot round to Portſmouth, but for want of convoy, they were under the neceſſity of ſending it in waggons over land. This ſhot conſiſts of caſes filled with caſt iron in the ſhape of priſms, and is intended to cut away the rigging. Some of the beſt officers in the ſervice have ridiculed the idea of depending on this ſhot for any eſſential advantage; we never yet have reaped any; but from the ridiculous delay that they occaſioned in the failing of our fleet, we have the mortification to know that they perhaps were the cauſe of our not preventing the junction of the enemy.

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kept the Britiſh fleet at home till we were not able to prevent the junction; and to the everlaſting infamy of the preſent A——, it turned out that the combined fleets amounted to ſixty-three ſail of the line, while the Britiſh, with all the reinforcements that could be ſent and after they had been ſix weeks at ſea, were no more than thirty-eight ſhips. The management of the preſent naval campaign has been ſuch as beggars precedent and record. Officers were appointed to important commands, who, by their conduct in ſome late diviſions in the navy, had rendered themſelves exceedingly obnoxious to the Service, while others were appointed, who, with the moſt amiable characters in domeſtic life, had neither the confidence nor the affections of men. It is not enough, that officers are wiſe, brave and capable; to unite the nerves of the country and to ſucceed, they muſt alſo be Popular. Having driven from the ſervice thoſe great characters who in their own perſons, united every neceſſary quality for ſo important a command, the Miniſtry made choice of ſome men, with whom the Sailors had ſeldom if ever acted, and in whom the Nation had neither dependence nor hope.

We do not mean, by this reflection, to follow the example of thoſe dark aſſaſſins who have whiſpered away the character of every Officer who has had the misfortune to accept a command beneath

the preſent Adminiſtration—Perhaps, in *their* turn, the preſent officers may experience ſimilar treatment; and when the purpoſes, for which they were employed, are anſwered, may feel, that thoſe who are incapable of conducting plans of national attack, are yet ingenious in the arts of ſecret accuſation, and can torture with all the inſtruments of ſenſibiliy. We leave it to modern Miniſters to blacken the ſubjects which they treat, we wiſh to give the painting all the truth of nature. It is no ſhame to a man, that his talents are more fitted for the ſerene and ſocial duties of retirement, than the activities of buſineſs. But it is a crime, of more than ordinary magnitude, in thoſe, who have the welfare of an Empire to maintain, to ſeduce ſuch a gentleman from the ſolitude he had courted, and introduce him into a ſcene, to which his habits in life and his talents were foreign. Such a perſon muſt neceſſarily act under diſadvantages unknown to one of a different character. Timid and unaſſured, he ſpeaks and acts with a diffidence that heightens the general diſtruſt: murmur and chagrin prevails around, and manœuvres of the greateſt moment are impeded if not deſtroyed by his mental depreſſion. It would be an invidious, though perhaps it would not be an unſerviceable taſk, to enumerate but a few of the conſequences that followed from ſo impolitic an appointment. We are in poſſeſſion of ſome facts, ludricous in themſelves, but which might have con-

concluded in national diſaſter; if M——rs had not contrived, by their management of our fleets, to prevent every leſſen ill, in the great and laſting diſgrace of flying before the enemy, and avoiding an engagement.

Eight and thirty ſhips of the line, but ſcantily provided with men and ſtores, were ill qualified to contend with ſixty-three. Miſconduct, in the firſt inſtance, brought degradation in the ſecond; and the fleet was ſent to ſea, not with an intention to fight, but to maintain a ridiculous ſhew of equality, when the ſubſtance was loſt. It was reſerved for that Miniſter, who declared in the Houſe of Lords, "that he ought "to loſe his head, if ever the combined fleets of "Bourbon exceeded that of this country," to ſend a fleet to ſea ſo inferior to the enemy, that its ſafety could alone depend upon its flight; and with which even raſh deſpair would not have ventured an engagement. It was reſerved for him to ſee that fleet unable to maintain the Dominion of the Seas—to protect the trade of Britain—guard the Engliſh Channel—or even to preſerve the Coaſt from inſult and invaſion. Till the preſent ſummer, it was not known how much Engliſhmen could fall, or what they would bear.—It was not known, that they would ſuffer the diſgrace of ſeeing their boaſted navy fly before the enemy. Accuſtomed to conqueſt, they

they had fancied, that their fleet was invincible, and they had yet to learn the humiliation that became the occaſion. How well they ſucceeded in the attainment, has been but too evident. Miniſters found the way to reduce, for a time, the ſpirit of Britain to the ſtandard of its power; having almoſt annihilated the one, they well nigh extirpated the other. They taught them hat pride was incompetent with weakneſs; and they were ſo fortunate in their applications, that having reduced the ſtrength, and the credit of Britain to a ſkeleton, they thought themſelves ſecure from popular reſentment, in the reflection, that but a ſkeleton of the ſpirit of Britain alſo remained. How long that temper of tameneſs and ſubmiſſion, if it is not already fled, will continue, we ſhall, in all human probability, *ſpeedily* aſcertain. There is a point, beyond which the mind cannot proceed in acquieſcence: when the laſt particle of confidence is exhauſted, men will recur to themſelves for deliverance, and being once arouzed into action, Vengeance will precede Salvation.

The Admiral, intruſted with ſo inadequate a force, no doubt, felt the humiliation of his Country, in the operations which he was obliged to aſſume. He lay inactive in the harbour of Torbay, while the immenſe fleets of the Weſt-India trade arrived under convoy of three or four frigates.—They arrived ſafe, indeed; but acci-

accident alone contributed to their eſcape. When certain information was brought him, that the combined fleets were coming to ſeek him in the Bays of Britain, ſince they could not meet him, where the fleets of Britain were heretofore to be found, he was forced to abandon the Engliſh Channel. The armament of Bourbon appeared in it, and came to an anchor in Plymouth Sound. What the ſituation and apprehenſions of that important place were, will be particularly attended to, by and by. In that ſituation they lay for ſome days, menacing the Port, and having it actually in their power to reduce the Garriſon, deſtroy the Dockyard, and burn or make captures of no leſs than ſix and twenty Ships of War. A ſingle regiment encamped on Mount Edgecombe, had the mortification to behold this ſhocking inſult on the Britiſh Shore, and with the two or three weak battalions planted on Buckland-Down ſaw themſelves, in caſe of a deſcent, deſtined to deſtruction in a cauſe which they were not able to ſupport. The Ardent man of war was taken in the eye of the army and garriſon; and the enemy, finding that the Britiſh fleet had ſlipped out of the Channel, and having a ſevere gale of wind to combat with in the ſound, purſued them to the high ſeas. They drove them from their rendezvous off the Iſlands of Scilly, and ſtrove for more than a fortnight, to bring them to action. The Britiſh

fleet, thro' the friendſhip of the winds, was able to avoid an engagement; and at laſt, by means of a favouring ſquall, to make good its retreat into the Channel. Thus cloſed the operations of the Naval Campaign, and thus every attempt and appearance of Conteſt concluded in the moſt direct and acknowledged flight. The Gazettes of Bourbon had it not only to boaſt, that they were the undiſputed Sovereigns of the Ocean, but that they had maintained their pretenſions in the face of the Britiſh ſhores, and had chaſed the boaſted navy of the lordly Iſland into her Harbours. This was a triumph to Bourbon as unaccuſtomed as the conſequent ignominy was to Britain. Their exultations were proportioned to our dejection, and the States of Europe ſtood aſtoniſhed at the change between us.

That no conſideration of preſerving a ſuperiority in leſſer departments of the war could have excuſed M——rs for leaving the grand armament of the Empire ſo inferior, is beyond queſtion; but when we conſider that the ſame inferiority hath reigned throughout, and that our flag hath been tarniſhed from its weakneſs whereever it has appeared, we muſt neceſſarily aſcribe their conduct to *more* than indolence. Our inferiority in the Weſt Indies has formed a very conſiderable ſource of calamity and diſgrace to the Nation in the operations of the preſent Campaign,

paign. With a fleet of one and twenty ſhips of the line and a frigate (ſo reduced with foulneſs, and ſo badly equipped with ſtores, that heavineſs and diſſatisfaction ſat in every face) Admiral Byron was oppoſed to the Count D'Eſtaing with four and thirty clean and well-provided ſhips. He kept him for a length of time cloſely blocked up in the Iſland of Martinique; but while he was conveying the homeward-bound trade thro' the Iſlands, the Count eſcaped; and inſtantly reduced the Iſlands of St. Vincent and Grenada. Mr. Byron brought him to action, but found him ſo ſuperior both in number and cleanneſs, that he could neither equal him in manœuvres, nor force him to cloſe engagement. Particular laurels were won in the action, but the nation felt diſcomfiture and diſgrace in the mortifying difference that appeared between them. There was no apparent want of ſpirit in the Officers or Men, but there was an impotence and inability in the ſhips which tarniſhed the honour of the flag. It may, and will, be proved, that the want of ſucceſs did not ſo much ariſe from the inequality in point of number, as condition: and this can be alone attributed to the Admiralty-Board of this Country.* We need not add that two of the Admirals in command, unable longer to ſee the fate of

* When Admiral Byron ſailed from Spithead in the ſummer of 1778, ſeveral ſhips of his ſquadron had been twelve months, ſome eighteen, and ſome two years out of dock.

their country endangered by the Conduct of that Board, left their appointments in diſguſt and came home.

It is not alone in the naval department that our weakneſs in the Weſt Indies has ſubſiſted. A total want of all reinforcements has involved the Iſlands in danger and deſpair. The withholding theſe reinforcements leads us to reflect on the Conduct of the Miniſter in regard to the ſupplies for the ſervice of the year. He declared in the Houſe of Commons, "that it was impoſſible, at all times, "to preſerve the outſkirts of the wide-extended "Empire of Britain, as the body muſt be main-"tained before the limbs." He came down to his place, on the declaration of hoſtilities from Spain, and aſſerted, "that without thirty thouſand additi-"onal troops, he could not detach any reinforce-"ments for the preſervation of the Weſt India "Iſlands, nor think the internal ſafety of Britain "even ſecure." He introduced a bill into Parliament for doubling the militia that this force might be raiſed. The oppoſition urged the inexpediency and danger of the meaſure; but, actuated by a pure deſire of forwarding, not clogging, every plan that tended to ſave the country, they told him they would not oppoſe it. They begged him to be cautious, and look forward to the effects of a bill that muſt, at all times, be obnoxious: it might raiſe a Rebellion inſtead of the

force required; and there were means more gentle and efficacious that might be adopted. The Miniſter was obſtinate—he called for unanimity, and the Oppoſition would not perſiſt. In the Upper Houſe, however, it met with a different treatment. One part of the Adminiſtration freely declared, it was a meaſure of the moſt ruinous tendency, and they ſaid, it was not a moment for exaſperating the People. Parliament obſerved this diviſion among Miniſters with much concern, but without ſurprize. It was no new thing to ſee meaſures adopted without concert, deliberation, or conſent, and they were but too much accuſtomed to ſee them, like the Græcian Matron, undo to-day the work of yeſterday. The bill was rejected, and a plan formed, which, if warmly and impartially cheriſhed, would have produced every ſalutary effect without the danger of the other. This was the plan of voluntary aids. The Miniſter received it with ſulky and forced ſubmiſſion. He aſſerted, "that he did not think it "would be adequate to the exigency, but ſo far as "it went, he declared, he would accept and be "thankful for it." Yet, though this meaſure was deſigned for the poſitive relief of the Empire; for the internal ſecurity of Britain, and the maintenance of the diſtant poſſeſſions, the Government thought proper to refuſe the firſt offer of a regiment that was made; and they have ſince rejected, with inſolence and diſreſpect, many gallant

and handſome offers from ſome of the nobleſt families in this country. The moſt evident and marked prejudice hath directed the acceptance of the aids in general, and the moſt ſhameful abuſes have taken place in the appointment of officers. The army hath been inſulted by promotions againſt the order and uſage of the ſervice, while the country has been left deſtitute of defence; that M——rs might gratify their private reſentments, and proſcribe almoſt all thoſe who have dared to diſpute with them the liberty of action. By this conduct the thirty thouſand men have not been raiſed, and they have claimed a ſanction in this reſpect from the charge of abandoning the Weſt India iſlands. Grenada and St. Vincent have fallen a ſacrifice to their ſyſtem. It is not only the loſs of thoſe iſlands we have to lament, but alſo the poſitive Abdication, on the part of Government, of the whole. When the merchants and proprietors of the Leward Iſlands waited on the Miniſter for that department, to requeſt reinforcements for the defence of thoſe valuable iſlands, the anſwer they received was, "that *Government* could not defend them—they "muſt neceſſarily protect and maintain *them-* "*ſelves.*" It has been argued, and with great truth, that this is in fact withdrawing from the iſlands that protection which is the bond of allegiance; and that all obligations of attachment and fidelity, on their parts, are at an end. If this

this is not a direct acknowledgment of their incapacity of holding the reins of government, if not a poſitive breach of truſt to their King and Country, it is hard to define the meaning of terms. This Adminiſtration, with their ſyſtem of defence, have not been able to protect the dominions of the Crown. Our diſtant poſſeſſions have been reduced, and our domeſtic inſulted; and when imminent danger follows on the heels of loſs, they inform their diminiſhing Country, that they cannot protect it. We have ſeen former Adminiſtrations, with glorious exertions of offence, tho' with leſs expenditure, not only preſerve all, but add to our poſſeſſions—The concluſion is ſimple and evident. The diſaſters of the preſent campaign have not ariſen from the intrinſic weakneſs of the country, but the impotence of the ſyſtem. It is the Adminiſtration that is incapable, and not the Kingdom that is weak. If the Leeward Iſlands are loſt to the Crown, it is becauſe protection was withdrawn, when protection might have been given. If Miniſters perſiſt in the excuſe, that they could not detach reinforcements becauſe the required thirty thouſand men were not raiſed, we call upon miniſters to anſwer to their Country, for rejecting at leaſt ten thouſand that were offered to them on the nobleſt conditions. What the ſtate of the Weſt India iſlands is at this moment; what the apprehenſions of this country reſpecting them, and what

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the force of the enemy in thoſe ſeas, we need not be pained with relating. Even the Gazettes of London throw melancholy and deſpair upon the ſubject.

But let us recur to the aſſertion of the Miniſter. "He could not detach reinforcements for "the protection of the Weſt Indies becauſe the "internal defence of this iſland was firſt to be "provided for." He declared, that there were a nominal ſeventy-three thouſand, and actually ſixty-three thouſand troops in Great Britain. All theſe were neceſſary to our internal defence, and he could not detach, unleſs thirty thouſand were added. Several thouſand *were* added. Let us then call to mind how he defended this iſland; the body and the ſoul, as he with emphaſis called it, of the empire, and for the protection of which he abandoned the Weſt Indies. He propagated, with extreme induſtry, the alarm of an invaſion, and by this means opened the purſe-ſtrings of the nation, in voluntary ſubſcriptions, for ſtrengthening the hands of Government. He called in the ſanctity of a royal proclamation to aid this aſſertion, and the nation was taught, from the Throne, to prepare for a ſerious and deciſive attempt on the independence of Britain. Inſtructions were given to the inhabitants to drive off the cattle; and had it not been for the well-timed and patriotic interference of the Lord-Lieutenant

Lieutenant of Suſſex, martial law would have been eſtabliſhed before the danger occurred in the maritime counties. And yet, tho' the Royal Proclamation implied, if it did not declare, that it was not known in what particular part of the coaſt the meditated deſcent would be made, there were not the neceſſary preparations made to repel it at any one. The poſts of the moſt ſingular value; the towns of commercial conſequence, and the garriſons that defended the beſt navigable inlets and harbours, were all left in the moſt ſhameful nakedneſs. The very Emporiums of our ſtrength, Portſmouth and Plymouth, were left without defence; and, at the moment when the fleets of France and Spain appeared off the latter, the Garriſon, and the General in command there, were not able to make reſiſtance of two hours continuance. Miniſters may diſpute the aſſertion with reſpect to places that were not threatened, but as the danger came with ſo formidable an aſpect to the very mouth of Plymouth, neither argument nor cunning can, in that particular inſtance, evade the truth.

There is a train of circumſtances in regard to the operations at this place, that will lead a penetrating mind to diſcoveries of importance. He will trace an intereſting Part of a ſyſtematic Whole, and, following effects with atttention to their cauſe,

cauſe, he will diſcover the moving principle of the preſent day.

When the French and Spaniſh fleets appeared off Plymouth, on the 16th of Auguſt, the alarm-guns were fired, upon information that a body of troops were debarking at the back of Penlees Point. The ſituation of the Officers in Command was truly diſtreſſing. In the garriſon there were not two rounds of cartridges, nor were there rammers nor ſpunges to the guns. The greateſt part of the carriages were old, rotten, and unable to bear the ſhock of a diſcharge. There was a party of Invalids in the garriſon, who neither had ſtrength nor number to man the guns. The Iſland of St. Drake, which commands the Sound, and ſeems planted by the hand of Heaven for the ſecurity of the harbour, was in the moſt ruinous and abandoned ſtate, without its complement of guns, without garriſon, without a commander, without ammunition, without every thing. Its ramparts were broken down; its guns diſmounted, and, altogether, it preſented a ſcene of complicated decay. The leſſer forts and redoubts on the main land had not a gun in them. The ditch, around the town of Dock, was filled up; the lines were broken down in a thouſand places, and lay in ruins. There were not five hundred ſtand of arms in the gun-wharf and garriſon to deliver out to the

the inhabitants, and there were not more than 3000 regulars and militia in the ſeveral camps and barracks—to occupy the garriſon, the forts, the lines, the defiles, and the heights in the vicinity. To complete the ſtate of nakedneſs, the Admiral of the Port was neither furniſhed with Cutters, by which he might give intelligence to ſhips, coming down the Channel, of their danger; nor had he even a copy of the private ſignals of Sir Charles Hardy, by which he might defeat the deceptions of the Enemy, and prevent our ſhips from falling into their ſnares.

With this force, and in this ſituation, the Admiral and General in command ſaw the Ardent fall a ſacrifice to the Enemy: they fairly confeſſed they were unable to make any adequate reſiſtance in caſe of an attack upon the port; and that two or three ſeventy-four gun ſhips might ſilence the garriſon, and enter the harbour in an hour's time.

Such was the ſtate of Plymouth on the 16th of Auguſt. To the intrinſic value of the beautiful dockyard and ſtores, which are valued at four millions of money, was to be added the immenſe value of twenty-ſix ſhips, moſtly of the line, which were then in the Dock, the Ha-

moaze, and the Sound *, and of which no more than three or four had either guns or men on board. It is unneceſſary to ſay, that the deſtruction of thoſe ſhips and the dockyard, would have given a deciſion to the war, which this country could not have recovered perhaps in half a century. We muſt have ſubmitted to the acceptance of any terms, however humiliating; and it is not eaſy to conjecture how much the Houſe of Bourbon, "in the hour of inſo-"lence" and ambition, would have claimed. That every department of Adminiſtration was culpable, for leaving Plymouth in ſo deſtitute a ſtate, is beyond queſtion. The Commander-in-chief viſited and inſpected the garriſon, or was paid for doing ſo, but a ſhort time before; the Admiralty-board had an intereſt in the ſafety of

* On the Stocks.	guns.	In the Hamoaze.	guns.
The Royal Sovereign	110	The Blenheim	90
Glory	90	Kent	74
Anſon	64	Hero	74
Meduſa	50	Torbay	74
Narciſſus	20	Ambuſcade	32
		And three others.	
In Dock.		In the Sound.	
The Ocean	90	The Iſis	50
Dublin	74	Stag	32
Rawleigh	32	Milford	32
Iris	32	Cormorant	18
Firebrand	18	Squirrel ſloop	
Tapageur	18	—— fireſhip and one other.	

Ply-

Plymouth, which ought to have induced them to make enquiries reſpecting its ſituation; and the Board of Ordnance at a time when an invaſion was declared to be in meditation, ought not to have truſted to the report of a ſtorekeeper or a clerk in office *,

The officers in command, with an alacrity and zeal that did them honour, united their

* The Board of Ordnance indeed were ſo warmly taken up with the more important buſineſs of inventions, that they had not leiſure to attend to their duty. It will perhaps be a matter of wonder with the judicious, that in a ſummer of ſuch anxious moment, when the utmoſt efforts of the Nation were hardly adequate to its exigencies, time, that might have been uſefully employed in preparation, ſhould be waſted in making ridiculous experiments.—Among the many inventions that have entertained and amuſed the Board of Ordnance, during the preſent campaign, there was that of a gentleman diſtinguiſhed by the name of the Squirter. He undertook, at the diſtance of two hundred yards, to ſquirt a liquid that would infallibly ſet the ſails of ſhips on fire. Men of liberality and true heroiſm rejected the idea, as incompatible with the ſyſtem of civilized war —Opportunity, however, was giving him for proving his invention, and no ſmall expence was incurred in rigging and preparing a veſſel for the experiment; nay a water engine was got ready to extinguiſh the flames. A very great concourſe of ſtate officers were aſſembled in Woolwich Warren on the day appointed, but the gentleman did not think proper to attend. Another day was fixed, and another, and at laſt the Squirter appeared. Expectation was raiſed to its higheſt point; he ſpent a very conſiderable time in trial, but to no effect—the Board loſt their entertainment, and the gentleman was diſmiſſed.

exertions for the defence of the place; and in the formation of plans as well as in the execution of them, they received the moſt liberal and unremitting aſſiſtance from ſeveral other officers of diſtinction that were then in the harbour—But notwithſtanding the efforts, and temporary expedients that were uſed, Sir David Lindſay, the Military Commander, felt himſelf under the neceſſity of making a requiſition for 10,000 men; without which, he ſaid, he would not be anſwerable, in caſe of an attack, for the Town and Dockyard. Before this requiſition could be conſidered in the Council, (and, indeed, before the Miniſters of State could be convened from their ſeveral Country Retreats) the lords of the Admiralty ſtepped out of their department; and in order to gratify the animoſities which they entertained againſt ſome of the principal officers concerned in the plans of defence, diſpatched a Mr. Le C—s, a creature of yeſterday's growth, to inſult thoſe officers by putting a ſtop to all their operations, and to treat them with the moſt inſolent and overbearing language. The Meſſenger felt all the importance of his commiſſion, and ſported with the feelings of brave and experienced men, with all the pleaſure of upſtart pride. Every meaſure that had been adopted was put a ſtop to. The ſailors were remanded from the garriſon on board of ſhips that had neither guns nor maſts, although there was not

one

one invalid and a half to each cannon. The boom that was laying acroſs between the Iſland and the Main was declared to be uſeleſs *, and in anſwer to the General's requiſition for 10,000 men, the tool anſwered "that the ſpirit of the "country would defend itſelf."

This attack on the independance of the ſervice met with that reception which every ſimilar attempt on its honour, we truſt, will always receive. It was looked upon as an endeavour to annihilate thoſe powers which a Commander in chief ought ever to poſſeſs, and to deſtroy that diſcretion which is ſo neceſſary to the choice and conduct of military operations. Sir David Lindſay acted up to the indignation of the Army, and informed Lord Amherſt that he would never ſubmit to the holding a nominal command, without an actual power; nor pledge his honour on the defence of a place, when he could not follow the means that he deemed neceſſary to that effect. He inſiſted on an immediate recall, and he accordingly was ſo,

* Mr. Le C— betrayed the motives of his employers by demanding of Mr. Commiſſioner Ourry, if no other perſon could be found to lay the boom acroſs, but Captain Berkeley. The Commiſſioner with juſt and manly reſentment, condemned the littleneſs of this reflection, and paid a compliment to Captain Berkeley, which that gentleman's delicacy would not thank us for repeating.

But

But before Mr. Le C— arrived in town with the tidings of his embaſſy, a Cabinet Council had been held (the only one, in the courſe of this ſummer, at which all the M——rs have met) and in a deliberation of ten minutes, approved of all the meaſures that the Officers at Plymouth had adopted; and returned his Majeſty's thanks to every department for the chearfulneſs, ſpirit, and unanimity with which they had acted for the common good. This unexpected turn was ſufficient to prove, that there was neither concert nor deciſion in the meaſures of the ſtate, and that one part of Adminiſtration acted independent of, and without the knowledge or agreement of the other. It was enough to ſhew, that the characters of military men were unſafe in the hands of an A————n, who preferred the indulgence of ſelfiſh predilections and animoſities to the public good; and who, without the power, dared to take the liberty to interfere with Officers in the execution of their duty; and reſtrain them by embarraſſments, or inſult them by reproach. It was enough to aſcertain all this, but it was not enough to bring into temper the minds of an indignant army and navy, who felt as they ought, the affront they had received *.

Three

* It may be aſked, how it is probable that the Admiralty ſhould think of affronting Lord Shuldham, Sir David Lindſay, and

Three weeks after the danger had threatened the port, which is the moſt convenient of the Empire, did the men who pretend to guide the national affairs, contrive to ſend arms, and ammunition for its defence. If they diſpute the picture which we have given of the ſituation of Plymouth, at the time of its danger, let them reflect that more than a hundred waggon-loads of arms, implements, and ammunition, but barely ſupplied the deficiences and wants of the garriſon.

We ſhall not anticipate the concluſions that will ariſe in the minds of men, on the above recital, by drawing from the facts a few obvious

and Mr. Ourry, who are all their friends? We will tell them why we think the Admiralty thought proper to inſult theſe officers. Lord S——m inſolently dared to join with eleven other Admirals in a Memorial to the Throne, on the unprecedented conduct of the Admiralty-board with reſpect to Admiral Keppel. He alſo preſumed to remind Lord S——h, of a promiſe reſpecting an appointment in the Mediterranean; and to enquire, if the report was true, reſpecting the employment of Sir Hugh Palliſer on that ſtation. Sir David Lindſay has a brother who ſpeaks and acts up to the ſentiments of his heart, and the General himſelf pretends to inveſtigation and cenſure. Mr. O—— preſumes with impertinent and unbecoming confidence, to fancy that he is an independant man. Add to theſe reaſons, that they had courted the aſſiſtance of all ranks, and had permitted the towering ambition of Admiral Keppel and Lord Howe's officers, to ſpring into action, and maintain the pre-eminence, which they aſſert, over all others, in ability and zeal.

reflections

reflections. It is apparent that the combined fleets, on their appearance in the Sound, had it abſolutely in their power to deſtroy the dock-yard and garriſon, and burn ſix and twenty-ſhips. The place was defenceleſs; and when the moſt reſpectable characters, forgetting all contrariety of opinion, and oppoſition of political principle, combined themſelves together and joined their whole ſtock of alacrity and experience, bravery and zeal, into one ſyſtem of exertion for the common defence; we find that their operations were defeated, and that Plymouth for three weeks remained in its ſtate of incapability. Is it not very fair to conjecture, that Miniſters had an end to ſerve in the abandonment of the port; and that the deſtruction of the dock-yard and ſhips, though it would have been death to the empire, poſſeſſed ſome ſecret advantage for them? Perhaps it would have furniſhed them with a pretence for concluding a peace, on any terms, with the houſe of Bourbon; by which means, whatever the nation might have loſt, they would have been enabled to keep their places and their profits. A ſerious attention to the conduct of the preſent campaign would probably reſolve it all into that motive; and would diſcover that they have been anxiouſly looking forward to ſome capital diſaſter, the loſs of Plymouth, Gibraltar, or Jamaica, by which this deſirable end might be accompliſhed.

But it may be aſked, if Plymouth was really in the deſtitute ſituation which we have related it to be, why the Count D'Orvilliers did not attack it? It is not eaſy to divine what really *were* his reaſons, but it is not difficult to conjecture what they *probably* were. Could human Senſe and Underſtanding believe that a Set of Men, choſen by a Sovereign for the maintenance of his Empire, would have left a place, of the immenſe importance of Plymouth, in ſo deſtitute a ſtate? The Count might hold the Adminiſtration of Britain in as much contempt as every man of equal judgment in this Country does hold them. Acquainted with their Indolence and Incapacity, he might reckon on as many wants, and aſcribe as much blunder and inattention to them, as he could think it poſſible for human Folly to reach; but yet his calculation would fall very far ſhort of the actual amount. He muſt think that the advantages of Nature would compound for the deficiencies of Art, and that an attack muſt be attended with certain hazard, and very improbable ſucceſs. He muſt think, at the ſame time; that if, when he had warped his fleet cloſe in ſhore, a ſtrong ſouth-weſt gale ſhould ſpring, he would, with all his ſtrength, become an eaſy prey to his inadequte and ſculking Enemy. We ought alſo to recollect that he could not keep his ſituation in the Sound on account of the weather.

It was not Plymouth alone that was left in this defenceleſs ſtate; but, as we have ſtated, every harbour and town of conſequence was equally unprovided with the means of repelling an Attack. Portſmouth, with all its walls and water, was very incapable of reſiſtance. Without troops or ammunition, it felt all the danger of its weakneſs; and it was lamentable to ſee Officers, of character and experience, in the want of other means, reduced to the neceſſity of ſeeking an uncertain protection in the removal of Land-marks.

The ſtate of the Northern Coaſt was ſimilar to the Southern, and, with much leſs danger, the people had equal apprehenſions. A deſperate Adventurer, with three or four ſhips, kept the whole Country in alarm. He even dared to make his way up the Firth of Forth, and put the inhabitants of Leith into the utmoſt conſternation. Unprovided for ſuch a Gueſt, they could not reſiſt him. He might have graſped at what he pleaſed. A fortunate gale of wind, however, prevented him from levying a Contribution at leaſt, and drove him to ſea.* We know into what terrors

* When Paul Jones's ſquadron appeared off Bruntellan, the Magiſtrates, who had heard of his being in thoſe ſeas, imagined it was a ſquadron of King's ſhips going in ſearch of him; and being in total want of all ammunition, to treat him in caſe of a viſit, they ſent on board the Pirate's own ſhip

rors he put the Inhabitants of Hull, and with how much eaſe he might have deſtroyed all the ſhipping in the Humber. Such depredation, however, it ſeems, was not within the limit of his Commiſſion. The Americans were content to ſhew us that Retaliation was in their power, but they were ſuperior to the practice of it; and they nobly triumphed over us, by manifeſting a refinement which we had thrown off. The important advantage which the Adventurer acquired, by a conqueſt "hardly, honourably won," gives us a proof at once of *his* ſtrength, and of miniſterial Impotence. He had concluded his career, and had ſailed for a foreign Port before Miniſters had thought of any preparations to oppoſe him; and, purſuing their own ſyſtem, they were too late even to chaſtiſe, much leſs to prevent. The requiſitions of the people of Hull were unattended to. The complaints of the County of Haddington neglected. No armed ſhips were ſent to the one, and the other was not even permitted to defend itſelf.

Collecting, therefore, the whole of their Conduct, with reſpect to the internal defence of Bri-

ſhip to requeſt a few Barrels of Powder and Ball. The meſſengers were not a little apprehenſive when they diſcovered their miſtake; but Paul received them very kindly, and having learnt their intended errand, he politely ſent the Magiſtrates ſix barrels of ammunition with his compliments,

tain, it is manifeſt, that at the moment when they were ſoliciting the ſupport of their Country, and when their Emiſſaries were promoting, in every corner of the Kingdom, Aids and Subſcriptions for that purpoſe—when they were aſſerting their own capability for the conduct of that War in which they had involved us—at the moment when they declared, it was not in their power to detach reinforcements to the Weſt Indies, as they muſt defend the body of the Empire before the limbs—at the moment when they averred, under the ſacred teſtimony of a Royal Proclamation, that a ſerious Invaſion of this Country was meditated, and that they knew not where the deſcent would be made—at the very moment too when the moſt important Dock-Yard was threatened, and when ſeveral parts of the Coaſt were inſulted—they left that Dock-Yard, and almoſt the whole Coaſt, *totally deſtitute* of *protection and the means of defence.*

When the Miniſters conſidered how much inferior the fleet of Britain was likely to be to thoſe of France and Spain, it is aſtoniſhing that they ſhould think of lowering that inferiority, by the detachment ſent, under Sir Edward Hughes, to the Eaſt Indies. This Expedition militated againſt their declared Principle; for it drew off part of our force, for the protection of foreign dependencies, when yet the defence of Britain itſelf

was

was incompleat. Eight capital ſhips compoſed this ſquadron, and they were diſpatched to a part of the world, where we not only were capable of preſerving our own poſſeſſions, but alſo, where our Eaſt-India Company had, with very little aſſiſtance, graſped at new Dominion. When the Count D'Eſtaing ſailed from the Harbour of Breſt in the ſpring of 1778, no force was detached to oppoſe him for more than ſix weeks; and Miniſters excuſed themſelves by the aſſertion, "That they were bound to provide, in the firſt "inſtance, for the Domeſtic Defence; and that "it would have been unpardonable to detach "Admiral Byron to America, till the Deſtina-"tion of the Enemy was known." In the diſpatch of Sir Edward Hughes, however, this Principle is abandoned. He is gone where there is no Enemy to oppoſe him, and he has withdrawn eight capital and well-appointed ſhips from the Station where the Enemy chuſes to conteſt the war. Had theſe ſhips been added to the grand Naval Armament of the Empire, we call upon Miniſters to ſay, if it is probable that the diſgrace which we have experienced in the courſe of this Campaign, would have purſued us to our Shores, and been publiſhed in the Channel. Bourbon might ſtill have claimed a ſuperiority, but her pretenſions would have been diſputed with a colour, at leaſt, of argument; and, by this time, we ſhould have ſought them, in their

Ports,

Ports, with confident impatience to have forced them to a deciſion on the point.

Will M—rs ſay, that the value of precarious Conqueſt in the Eaſt can over-ballance, or even compound for the loſs of Dignity and Empire, that we have ſuſtained at home? Admitting even that Manilla may be reduced, the temporary conqueſt will be a poor equivalent for the Surrender of that Dominion which our Forefathers had eſtabliſhed on the Ocean. Such an Acquiſition may, indeed, provide pompous matter for an Extraordinary Gazette, and furniſh M——rs, by a defalcation of its Ranſom, with additional Powers of Corruption; but it can make no attonement to the bleeding Country, for the diminution of its naval importance.

By the unwiſe detachment of this ſquadron in the Spring, our inferiority in Europe was decided, and diſaſter attended on every operation of the Campaign; while the purpoſe for which it was diſpatched, was alſo defeated by its unſeaſonable departure. The Enemy had time to obſerve the extent of our Summer Armament; and by keeping their Force collected, to provide ſuch a Superiority, as enabled them, in ſufficient ſeaſon, to make Arrangements for the ſecurity of the Eaſt. Very ſlender hope remains of territorial Conqueſt in that quarter,

and we have the mortification of knowing for a certainty, that that Expedition, with another equally improper, hath coſt us the Sovereigaty of the Ocean.

The other Expedition equally improper we need not ſay, is that of Admiral Arbuthnot to America. Too late to be of any ſervice to the Campaign in that quarter, his and Sir Edward's junction with the grand Weſtern Squadron, would have accompliſhed an Equality at leaſt, if not a Superiority to the combined Enemy; and given an eclat to the Operations of the Campaign, that would have done more to the concluſion of the American Conteſt, than his arrival at New-York on the 26th of Auguſt. Such a junction was, without doubt, the policy of the time.

Were we to eſtimate the Advantages that theſe expeditions are to produce, from the Conſequences that have already reſulted, the calculation would have very little to recommend it to the Nation. Sir Edward Hughes, with a capital force under his command, might have regained, without the loſs of a man, thoſe Settlements which we have loſt on the African Shores. Being the ſource of a valuable and neceſſary Trade, it was naturally expected that a viſit, *en paſſant*, from the Admiral would have

have reſtored them to the Country. This expectation was founded, however, on a firmer baſis than a ſenſe of their Value. The Nation was not to ſuſpect, in the year 1779, that the *value* of an Object would recommend it to the Attention of M——rs; but they fancied that the retaking of theſe Settlements was exactly within their plan of Motions. They recollected, that the M——r declared, on the departure of D'Eſtaing and Byron, "that the latter "would be in time to *chaſtiſe*, if not *to prevent*" —and they remembered alſo, the Aſſertion on the Loſs of Dominica, "that though we might "not at all times be in force to *preſerve*, we "would be able to *re-take*." They depended on theſe Aſſertions, and flattered themſelves, that a conqueſt ſo opportune would not be over-looked. Vain, however, were their expectations. They found that M——rs had a Story for every occaſion, and that their Aſſertions were at all times ſubject to the Parliamentary Mode of Explanation. There is an Ambiguity in the conduct of the Fleet in Africa, which we would wiſh to inveſtigate for the ſake of Truth; but we are deterred by that reſpect which is due to the character of an abſent Man.

The late arrival of Admiral Arbuthnot at New-York deferred, at leaſt, if it did not deſtroy, all the purpoſes of his Expedition; the

Com-

Commander in Chief was able to do no more after, than he was capable of before—that is, to defend himſelf in the iſland of New-York, and make deſultory Expeditions along the coaſt to burn Villages, or collect Proviſions. The Admiral was too late to prevent the Diſgrace which we ſuſtained in the Weſt-Indies; and therefore being incapable of entering into the buſineſs of the American Campaign, every ſervice that he has rendered, would have been ſupplied, if, after having taken a ſhare in the operations of Europe, he had ſailed for America in due time for the enſuing year.

The Inveſtment of Gibraltar by ſea and land for more than two months, has given a very laſting Teſtimony of our Weakneſs to every foreign State. The Key by which we *may* have it at all times in our power to ſhut up a part of the Enemy's Force is an object of ſuch conſideration, as nothing but an abſolute Incapacity would tempt us to abandon. To that miſerable ſtate, however, have we been reduced; and the Nation has, at this moment, the mortification to know, that M——rs have made no Preparation nor Attempts to ſave it. True, indeed, they have heard, that it was in the Contemplation of ſome Men, high in the State, to equip a ſmall ſquadron, and diſpatch a Gen-

tleman to its relief, whoſe late conduct hath rendered him abhorrent to the generality of the ſervice. It could not have entered into the minds of any ſet of Men, but that which encouraged and protected him in his diabolical Attempts, to recal him from the privacy to which univerſal obloquy had driven him, and inveſt him with ſo important a Command. Happily for this Country, the intention tranſpired, and the conſequences it produced on the Minds of the Navy, deterred the headſtrong M——y from a ſtep that would have concluded the Exiſtence of our maritime Strength. Diſappointed in this project, M——rs have given up to appearance all thoughts of ſaving Gibraltar. Whether the failure of their favourite Plan is the cauſe of that neglect, we confeſs we are not able to determine, but ſuppoſitions, which are free, are certainly unfavourable.

Amidſt this ſtate of complicated danger, when we are ſtruggling for our actual exiſtence, as an independant Nation, we feel ourſelves rejected by every neighbouring Power. They ſtand with their arms acroſs, and ſee the tempeſt roaring around us. This, perhaps, is the firſt moment when the Nations of Europe did not find an Intereſt and Honour in connecting themſelves with Britain; and it plainly proves, that there is ſome more imminent danger, than

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that which threatens us from abroad, that deters them from an Alliance. They ſee the Reins of Government ſtill entruſted to thoſe impotent Hands that have involved us in all our Dangers; and who, having proved themſelves inadequate to the preſervation of the Empire while in peace, or to the conduct of a war, while yet it was inſignificant, are ſtill, by obſtinate infatuation, maintained in Power, and permitted to accompliſh the full fruition of the Ruin which they have ſo ſucceſsfully begun. They ſee, "that to unite themſelves with ſuch "men, is to unite themſelves with Infamy and "Ruin." Apprehenſion deters them, therefore, from indulging their friendly inclinations towards us, and they keep at a wary diſtance from that contagion which they conceive to iſſue from the Councils of our State.

Nor have they forgot the unbecoming Inſolence which theſe M——rs aſſumed in the days of their Proſperity. Were it poſſible to conceive that Reſentment could operate on the meaſures of Kings, the memory of the Treatment they have received may have influenced their Deſertion. They ſee that Inſolence now converted into the moſt whining Servility, and they are taught to deſpiſe thoſe whom they before condemned.

Unable to make any ſucceſsful Negotiation, M——rs have in the courſe of this ſummer, though not avowedly, publiſhed a *Juſtifying Memorial*, wherein they make their appeal to Europe on the Juſtice of their Cauſe. Deſerted by the antient Allies of Britain, and unable to acquire new ones, they fly for ſhelter to the palliation of Language, and deprecate by Falſhood the Friendſhips they have loſt by Error. In this Memorial they dare to aſſert, that "the "love of Equity, Moderation, and of Peace, "have diſtinguiſhed the preſent Reign." They have recited no examples, indeed, to illuſtrate theſe principles, nor adduced the ſmalleſt Evidence from the Hiſtory of the Reign, to procure credit to the aſſertion with Europe and Poſterity. They will thank us, perhaps, for ſupplying the defect, by adducing the only one inſtance that we diſcover of "that love of "Peace" which they preſume to ſay hath been the guiding Rule.

When our amiable Sovereign aſcended the throne of theſe dominions, he found his People in a career of Conqueſt: humbling the pride and perfidy of Bourbon; and having it in their power, by a continuance of exertion, to ſilence, if not annihilate, for a century, their Ambition and Strength. With all the ardour and expectation of Youth in his Boſom, he abridged the

the glories of conqueſt, and choſe to forego himſelf the advantages of war for the calmer tranquilities of peace. This is an example of moderation that the records of time can hardly equal; but ſhould Europe and Poſterity in their review of the actions of the preſent reign, find a ſhocking contraſt to this, in the principle of the ſecond war in which the Sovereign was engaged—let them aſcribe our obſtinate perſeverance in the purſuit of the calamities, without the advantages of war—the iniquity with which it was begun, and the folly with which it was conducted, not to a revengeful ſpirit and an inordinate thirſt of prerogative in the Sovereign, but to the vices of an Adminiſtration that drove their maſter into meaſures as ruinous as they were diſgraceful; and who, having collected the ſtorm around his head, charged him with being the author of it.

This Juſtifying Memorial produced no effect, and Britain remained as before, deſtitute of Allies—the Ambaſſador at the Hague remonſtrated to the Durch on their defection, with a degree of ſpirit which few people fancied the M——rs, in this ſtate of humiliation, would have thought themſelves warranted to aſſume. This remonſtrance, however, was conſidered as the laſt gaſp of dying inſolence: and at the very moment when we thus addreſſed them, our Ambaſſador had

had the mortification to ſee a Pirate and Adventurer openly protected, and his Sovereign's flag flying in one of their principal ports beneath the thirteen Stripes of America. He ſaw preparations going forward for a very powerful armament, and he in vain ſolicited to be informed of the deſtination.

As if all theſe external calamities were not equal to the deſtruction of Britain, a new mine has been ſtarted in the boſom of the Empire. Preſſed by the heavy hand of aſſuming prerogative, the people of Ireland have long petitioned in vain for redreſs. The prejudices of the intereſted in this Country have been anxiouſly graſped at by a licentious Miniſtry, and made the plauſible pretext for the moſt violent reſtrictions—That ſelfiſh illiberality which is the attendant on Commerce, aided the deſigns of Adminiſtration. They cheriſhed the paſſion in the breaſts of their Countrymen; and, under the maſked battery of Britiſh welfare, covered the moſt lawleſs attacks on the independance of our Siſter Kingdom. The attention of that people was diverted, from the attempts on their Conſtitution, to the more preſent calamities of penury and famine. Oppreſſion was brought home to the door of every individual, that anxiety for ſelf-preſervation might detach him from every other concern. Having accompliſhed this grand object, by means the moſt abandoned;—by

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cruſhing manufacture, deſtroying agriculture, promoting emigration, increaſing the number of abſentees by the allurements of office and rewards in this Country; by augmenting the penſion liſt; and by every other art which M——rs alone can poſſeſs and T——ts practiſe—they proceeded then to the grand operation of deſtroying the independance of the kingdom.—The courtly doctrine of Submiſſion to the Britiſh Parliament was propagated with the moſt earneſt avidity. The Hangers-on and Expectants advanced in the cauſe, and ſome men were baſe enough to deſert their native Country, in the criſis of her danger, and join the clamorous advocates for Iriſh depreſſion. Sir William B— attempted to throw the ſanctity of law upon the doctrine, and proſtituted his abilities in the infamous taſk. The riſing ſtudents of the age, who are taught to take his Commentaries as their Oracle, were infected with the inſinuating poiſon, and it began to operate throughout the kingdom. The falſhood however was detected *, and the Iriſh were awakened to a ſenſe of their danger, and their ſtrength.

Actuated, however, by the moſt perfect loyalty, they approached the throne, with that dignity

* Vide Obſervations on the Doctrine laid down by Sir William Blackſtone, reſpecting the extent of the power of the Britiſh Parliament, particularly with regard to Ireland.

indeed, which is inſeparable from their character, but with that earneſtneſs which their diſtreſſes required, and prayed for ſpeedy and effectual redreſs. They were not diſmiſſed with a denial but deluded by condolance—A whimpering appearance of friendſhip inſpired them with patience and hope, and they truſted to the intereſt and interference of the M——rs who had expreſſed thoſe ſentiments of humane regard.

Soon, however, conviction diſſipated the cloud of confidence, and diſappointment taught them what they had to expect from M——rs. Palliation and temporary expedients alone took place when they expected ſubſtantial and permanent relief. The conſequence was natural and neceſſary. Having no truſt in the friendſhip or the juſtice of M——rs, they recurred to themſelves, and looked for deliverance into that power which God and Nature had put into their hands.

Arouſed from their dependance and lethargy, the meaſures they adopted were what ſpirit, reſentment, and policy inſpired. They aſſociated themſelves together and acquired the uſe of arms. The ſpirit was too univerſal to be checked by the menaces of impotent authority, and it grew into magnitude by the ſenſe of injuſtice, which affected the whole kingdom, and which tended but to one centre. Reſolutions of non-

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importation became general throughout the Country: and men who take the trouble to inveſtigate the cauſes of events, and to look forward to their probable conſequences, ſaw in this kindled ſpirit, and theſe operations, a kind of political analogy, which led them to draw ſimilar concluſions, from beginnings ſo like to thoſe in America.

M——rs alone ſeemed to ſtand undiſturbed by the general alarm. Although under the greateſt obligation to contrive means for the pacification of Ireland, they ſtood unconcerned Spectators of the riſing tumult, and neither ſtrove to conciliate nor repreſs the ſpirit. A very gentle application on their part, would have quieted the minds of the people, and though they might not have condeſcended again to place a confidence in the promiſes of men who had deceived them, there yet were means in the power of the Crown that would have ſoftened their reſentments and made them wait with temper, for the meaſures of Parliament.—Inſtead of this mediation being attempted, they were inſulted with the moſt contemptuous indifference through the whole Summer; and on the meeting of their Parliament, inſtead of thoſe aſſurances which it was the policy of this Country to give, and which they expected, they were again treated with a whining Speech of pro-

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ſeſſions, without either the warmth or teſt of ſincerity.

The fire which had circulated through every artery of the kingdom, now reached the heart, and with a ſudden and tremendous exploſion, burſt into a ſudden flame. Reſiſtance was in vain, and "a Free Trade to all the Ports" was declared by the unanimous voice of Parliament to be the only remedy that we *ſhould* give, or that they *would* take. The triumph that ſucceeded on this memorable victory was animated and tumultuous; the people looked up to their Repreſentatives as to a body emancipated from the thraldom of corruption, and from the grave multitude that ſurrounded the Senate Houſe, "there aroſe an involuntary burſt of gratitude "and tranſport." They thanked them with the beſt of all earthly rewards, their love, and admiration. It was a day of melancholy triumph —they mingled with their raptures and applauſe, a ſtedfaſt face of reſolution to warn their Repreſentatives againſt a change of conduct.

In what this determination of Ireland will conclude, we are yet to learn; but we have already had a proof of the reſentment which they are determined to pour on the devoted head of every man that oppoſes the meaſure of relief, in their treatment of ſeveral partiſans of Adminiſtration who held them

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in contempt—We have an omen of their proceſs in the reſolution which they have formed to oblige their Repreſentatives to grant no other than a ſhort Money-Bill. That effectual and permanent relief muſt be immediately granted to them is beyond queſtion; but if in the obſtinacy and prejudices of a part of this Country, that meaſure of redreſs which they require ſhould not be given, a revolt and perhaps a ſeparation will be the conſequence. The appearance is dreadful. The ſpirit and the ſtrength of Ireland is aroufed, diſciplined and arrayed; they are ready to atchieve what they now condeſcend to demand. If we blindly and impotently deny it, the alternative is evident. It will be a poor conſolation in the day of recompence and juſtice, that we can exclaim to Miniſters, with the fulneſs of execration, "for this among the reſt, are you condemned."

It was not ſufficient to the completion of our miſeries that Ireland ſhould be driven to this deſperate retreat, but England alſo has been deſtined to bear a part of this Summer's Exploits. An attack was made on her tendereſt part—The privilege of free-election. A vacancy happened in Parliament for the County of Middleſex. The Lord Lieutenant of that County preſumed to interfere, and without knowing the choice of the Freeholders, applied to the Miniſter for the Chiltern Hundreds, in favonr of Colonel T——l.

The Colonel with the promiſe of the Miniſter in his pocket attended a meeting of the Freeholders and offered himſelf to their ſervice. Another gentleman, whoſe zeal and attachment they approved was the object of their choice, but this gentleman was alſo in Parliament. Confident however of their rights, they entreated this gentleman to make application to the Miniſter for a vacating place. He did ſo, and was denied.

An Alarm took poſſeſſion of every mind, and the Freeholders viewed this conduct of the Miniſter, as a moſt violent perverſion of the Act of the 6th of Queen Anne, and an unconſtitutional incroachment into the rights of election. It was, in fact, to declare that *he* and not the Freeholders ſhould return a member for Middleſex. They might indeed prefer a Candidate in oppoſition to his, but he would prevent them from returning the man of their choice. It was ſaid, and with peculiar beauty, "that the Miniſter had erected an "iron door of corruption to the Houſe of Com-"mons, and *he* alone was poſſeſſed of the key." The Freeholders could not withhold their contempt as well as their deteſtation when they remembered that the Miniſter had given and withheld the Chiltern Hundreds, as his purpoſes required, on grounds ſo different—In the caſe of of Colonel L——l, he had given the vacating place for the expreſs purpoſe of *creating a conteſt*;

in the caſe of Mr. Bailey, he withheld it *to prevent one.* In Lord Hyde's caſe he gave it *becauſe one more Candidate added to two, could not increaſe the conteſt*; and he gave it to Colonel T——t *becauſe he was the firſt comer.*

The reſentment of the County was equal to the apprehenſion. Deprived of the man of their choice, they ſelected from the independent gentlemen of the County, one borne down with years and infirmities, to ſhew that principle, and virtue alone was what they wanted, and that no other recommendation was required to ſecure their ſuffrages. Having declared their determination, they appalled their Opponents, and were left to bear their Candidate in triumph to the Huſtings, and elect him unoppoſed. But it was not ſufficient that they overcame the attempt in that inſtance; they determined to provide againſt every repetition of it in future. With this intention they aſſembled and prepared a petition to the Houſe of Commons wherein they ſtated their grievance with reſpectful freedom, and prayed them to conſider of ſome permanent ſecurity againſt this unwarrantable and lawleſs abuſe.

The ſpirit of the County on this occaſion was arouſed, and it bore an aſpect of determination and fire that hath already been contagious. It is now ſpreading with vehemence and impetuoſity

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over Britain, and is charged with reſolutions that under the hand of Heaven will accompliſh the end of national deliverance. It is not confined to this particular grievance, but feeling the calamities to which we are induced, and ſeeing with horror, the abyſs before us, it is directed to general ſalvation, and calls for "an immediate "enquiry into the true cauſe of our humiliation "and diſtreſs."

Nor has Scotland been exempted from the miniſterial infatuation of the late receſs. Left deſtitute of all means of defence, they have applied to government for reinforcements; or, if thoſe could not be granted, for leave to aſſociate, arm, and diſcipline themſelves. Their requiſition was treated with the moſt contemptuous neglect, and they were denied all, but the laſt refuge of humanity, that of depending on the care of Heaven.

In the whole of that progreſs which hath brought us to our preſent extremity, we have obſerved, with deteſtation and regret, that Officers of the moſt diſtinguiſhed abilities have been driven from the ſervice of their Country. The means that have been practiſed to accompliſh this end, are too well known to require relation. It is the beſt proof of the villainy of their means, that public obloquy hath followed but one of theſe Officers into retirement, and *he* was the ſupported creature

ture of the preſent Adminiſtration. When we conſider that the loſs of theſe Officers, in the preſent imminent moment, is an abridgment of our national power, and, in fact, deprives us of the right Arm of our naval and military Strength, it will be proper, in this Collection of Miniſterial Enormities, to advert to a late tranſaction of this nature. It ſtrikes at the very Root of Military Independence, and with other attempts, of a ſimilar nature, it hath ſerved to awaken the Army to a ſenſe of their condition.

General Burgoyne, on his arrival in England, was denied admittance to his Sovereign. An Etiquette he was told exiſted, that excluded Officers, who had encountered misfortune, from St. James's. The Gentleman felt, with all the quickneſs of ſenſibility, the inſult that was contained in this new-created Doctrine. It included an Accuſation as well as an Inſult; and, impatient for his Character, he inſtantly demanded a Trial. Another Etiquette was now adduced, and a Board of Officers declared, "That being "the Priſoner of the Congreſs, he could not be "Tried by his Country." The General was forced to ſubmit, but he could not be patient. He determined to urge Parliament to an Enquiry into his Conduct. There was a danger in this for which the Adminiſtration were not prepared; and they endeavoured to defeat the Deſign by a conditional Order for the General's re-

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turn to America. It was truly ſingular, that after having declared the General to be out of the Juriſdiction of Martial Law, they ſhould thus ſubject him to it. The General anſwered this Order with Arguments of the juſteſt nature, and he heard no more of it till the month of September laſt, when he received a *reprimand* from his Majeſty, by the hand of the War-Secretary, "for a neglect of Duty and diſobedience of Orders." The ſeverity and injuſtice of this Puniſhment is beyond the power of comment. There is no precedent in the Hiſtory of Nations to ſanctify ſuch a Reprimand. Without trial, without conviction to be condemned, may be conſonant to the tyranny of Deſpotic States, but even the martial Brevity of our Military Conſtitution cannot warrant it. He is declared to be out of the power of the Crown; to be the Priſoner of America, not the General of Britain. While this Doctrine is aſſumed, and on that pretence he is baniſhed the Royal Preſence, the contrary Aſſumption muſt be violent, unconſtitutional and unjuſt.*

The Army have all accepted this treatment of Mr. Burgoyne as a general Inſult on themſelves. It is an attack on their Independence, and they believe it to have its origin in the ſame ruinous

* Vid. A Letter from Lieutenant-General Burgoyne to his Conſtituents.

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ſource from which all the injuries they have ſuſtained, in the courſe of this ſummer, have flowed. They conſidered, on the appointment of a noble Lord to the chief Command of the Forces, that he was a weak negative Character, incapable of Activity to their advantage, but equally unfit for Alacrity to their detriment. They would reap no Good, but they fancied they could experience no Ill from his Abilities. Covetous and vain, they had no doubt but he would gratify thoſe Vices to their utmoſt extent, and would ſtrive to accumulate Honours and Emoluments in extravagant abundance; but they never imagined, that, to accompliſh this point, he would deſcend to the mean traffic of Peculation, and would ſink the dignity of a Soldier in the infamy of a common Jobber. Their opinion of his Character, however, has undergone a very conſiderable change in the progreſs of the preſent Summer, and they view him in the multiplied character of T—l, E—y, and D——er. Perhaps, when the Army have leiſure to enquire more induſtriouſly into the truth of this accuſation, they will correct themſelves in this Charge, and acknowledge there is a Spring, in the inmoſt receſs of the Military Machine, which gives the Movement to this Automaton; and that, tho' he has been the Agent of their Injuries, the Author is unſeen.

When we eſtimate the blunders of the late Receſs, and ſtand aſtoniſhed at their amount, we are ſeduced by curioſity as well as deteſtation, to inquire into the Cauſe. The taſk is, indeed, a difficult one. The well-known Diviſions and Diſtractions in the Adminiſtration, though they may have contributed largely to our Calamities, yet cannot poſſibly have produced ſuch wonderful effects. If we add to this all the impotence and inattention that can be reaſonably expected to fall to the lot of human Nature, we ſhall yet find ourſelves much ſhort of the neceſſary computation. And yet of all theſe ingredients we have before us a very aſtoniſhing abundance. The Preſident of the Council has been but once at the Board in the courſe of the ſummer receſs. The Secretary for the Southern Department has dropped all connection with the Miniſter. The Chancellor has declared, that without a change, the Empire muſt be ruined, and all the Houſe of Bedford hold the ſame language. The M—r's Factions are abandoned by the Majority of the Council, and a great Perſonage has openly avowed himſelf to be his own Miniſter. The M——rs have fled to their country-ſeats, and delivered over the Management of Affairs to Clerks in Office, and to interior Cabinets, in which "they live, move, and have their Being." They have all met together but once at the

Council-Board ſince the end of the laſt Seſſion, and on that occaſion they continued no more than ten minutes.

The World will therefore join with us in acknowledging, that much may be attributed to the diſconcerted ſtate of the Adminiſtration: but when we reflect on the events and the meaſures of the late Receſs, we muſt ſtill ſearch further for the primary Cauſe. It is only in the power of God to ſearch into the hearts of men: but when we review the Conduct of a Campaign on which ſo much depended, and when the very being of the Empire ſeemed at ſtake, we cannot withhold our condemnation, nor believe that any motive ſhort of T—— could have given riſe to ſuch a ſyſtem.

To conclude. When we collect the meaſures of the preſent Adminiſtration; the preſent ſtate of the War in which they have involved us; and the Temper, Spirit, and Reſources of the Nation, and bring them together in review, we are at no loſs to determine what line of Conduct we ought to aſſume. It is not to the Weakneſs of the Empire; the exhauſted State of the Nation; the Deſpair of the People, that we are to aſcribe any part of our Calamities: the Empire, diſmembered as it is, has ſtill Strength; this Nation hath Wealth; and Britons

tons "cannot connect danger with deſpair."—It is apparent that with men who have the affections and confidence of the people, who would be capable of drawing forth the latent ſtrength, and whoſe wiſdom and enterprize would direct it to objects of important offence, this Empire might yet be reſcued from that cloud, which hovers over its head, and which is charged with peſtilence and death.

There are men in this Country in whom America could have truſt—Men with whom they would negotiate, and to whoſe hands they would cheerfully commit their intereſts, in the confidence, that candour, juſtice, and patriotiſm, would hold the ſcale between the Countries, and that mutual benefit would follow the deciſion. Driven to deſpair, they fled to France for ſuccour; but they have, through the progreſs of the conteſt diſjoined the people of this Country from the Government, and have retained their affection for the one, while they have withdrawn their allegiance from the other.

There are men in this Country with whom the States of Europe could with ſafety make alliance. Men whoſe abilities, they know, would inſtitute a ſyſtem of active exertion; and by calling forth the popularity of the Army and Navy would introduce again into the ſervice

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that ambition and enthuſiaſm which warmed every boſom in the progreſs of the laſt war, and graſped at conqueſt by every ſpecies of attack. With ſuch men they would find an intereſt and glory to ally; they would participate in our ſucceſs, and honour would reſult from the very aſſociation.

The criſis is more imminent than any former moment in the exiſtence of Britain! The deliverance muſt be ſudden or the fate will be determined. The Nation is ſo far involved in the danger, that they only can riſe ſuperior by encountering it.—To turn the back and recede, would be ſure deſtruction. They have for a time, like the Waggoner in the fable, obſerved the Machine of State to be clogged in the ſlough of Miniſterial Incapacity; they have cloathed themſelves in mourning on the event, and with uplifted eyes and folded hands, have anxiouſly waited the inteference of Heaven. How much more would they be intitled to the benefit of Providence, if calling to mind the anſwer of Mercury from the cloud, they aroſe from ſupineneſs into action, and laying their ſhoulders to the team, contributed to the deliverance for which they pray.

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